



TOWN OF TEWKSBURY

TOWN HALL
1009 MAIN ST
TEWKSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS 01876

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Raymond Lisiecki, Chairman
David Aznavoorian, Vice Chair
Rob Kocsmiersky, Clerk
Thomas L. Cooke
Paul McDermott
Ronald Hall

Meeting Minutes March 24, 2016

1) Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Raymond Lisiecki, Chairman, at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall. Present at the meeting were David Aznavoorian, Tom Cooke, Paul McDermott, Ronald Hall, and Rob Kocsmiersky. Also in attendance was Richard Montuori, Town Manager, Karen Kucala, Finance Director, and Melissa Johnson, Recording Secretary.

2) Budget Review (Fire Department)

Present was Fire Chief Michael Hazel and Deputy Chief Al Vasas.

The total town manager recommended FY17 fire department budget is \$5,150,135 representing an increase of approximately \$289,731 from FY16. The FY17 department request is approximately \$5,287,590. Mr. Montuori noted that he hopes to address the items that have been taken out of the department requested budget in the fall.

Chief Hazel explained that three retirements have been included in the FY17 budget; one being a captains position. Funds have been included in the salaries budget for this promotion as well training at the academy. There is an increase of approximately \$20,000 in overtime.

Chief Hazel noted that he had requested \$201,630 for terminal leave buyback and this has been reduced to \$82,630. This is one of the items that Mr. Montuori hopes to address in the fall.

There is an increase of approximately \$10,850 in maintenance and repairs due to unexpected ladder issues. Chief Hazel noted that this was something that they were aware they were going to have to address; however, it occurred more prematurely than anticipated.

There is an increase of approximately \$22,575 in professional services which Chief Hazel noted is largely the result of the ambulance reporting software being transferred over from the police department.

Chief Hazel reviewed the communications line items and discussed the problems with current system. It was noted that the system is antiquated and no longer supported.

Chief Hazel noted that there is not much for facilities maintenance and repairs as they will be seeking to construct a new station under the capital improvement plan (CIP). As a result, no improvements are being requested. The current Center Fire Station is 50 years old and has been in continuous 24 hour service since 1966 and continued patching of the roof is not feasible due to its age and condition. In addition, the windows are inefficient, the heating system is antiquated and unreliable, and the ceiling tiles and insulation are in poor condition. Chief Hazel explained that capital repairs have been delayed in recent years in support of the long-term capital plan to replace the building. The roof, windows, heating system, and interior ceiling will need to be replaced as soon as possible if the station's replacement is delayed.

Chief Hazel noted that there is also a slight increase in office supplies due to general cost increases.

There is an increase of approximately \$7,300 in ambulance supplies. Chief Hazel noted that ambulance runs are up and they are also required to pay for Narcan.

It was noted that gas and diesel has been transferred to the DPW.

Chief Hazel explained that there is an increase of approximately \$12,200 in ambulance billing. There has been a change in the collection company and collections have since increased. As a result, they have to pay more for the service as it is based on a percentage of the collection amount. The actual figures have not yet been received. Consideration is being given to a second full time ambulance. Mr. Hall asked if the transport figure includes mutual aid and Chief Hazel confirmed this.

The line item for uniforms has been transferred to salaries. It was noted that the requests under uniforms have been taken out and will be addressed at town meeting in the fall.

Chief Hazel discussed an agreement with Lowell General Hospital where \$10,000 was received for a quality improvement program; which will eventually be mandated. Mr. Cooke asked who is mandating this and Chief Hazel explained the Office of Emergency Management Services. Chief Hazel will provide Mr. Cooke with additional information on this.

Mr. Lisiecki opened the meeting to the members for their questions.

Mr. Cooke thanked Chief Hazel for his budget presentation and asked why there was such a change in the FY16 budget and Chief Hazel explained that this was due to the channel 2 repeater.

Mr. Cooke asked what the cost is for the sick leave buy back for three retirees and Chief Hazel noted approximately \$119,000.

Mr. McDermott noted that the narrative provided by the Chief discusses not meeting standards and asked what needs to be done to meet the standards. Chief Hazel explained that 8-12 staff members would be needed and noted that there will likely be a request for additional staff in the near future due to the aging population which results in a higher call volume.

Mr. Aznavoorian asked if “vehicle preventative maintenance” is covering everything or just repairs and if the new equipment has been taken into consideration and Chief Hazel confirmed the new equipment has been included.

Mr. Aznavoorian asked who is managing the software that is being brought in and Chief Hazel explained that the Police IT department and Town IT department help out and the software sits on the police server. Mr. Aznavoorian asked if a computer replacement program has been put in place and Chief Hazel explained that all of the computers were recently replaced at the same time and noted that he will start to look into a replacement plan.

Mr. Kocsmiersky noted that it is his understanding that the utilities at the central fire station were just combined with the annex building. Mr. Montuori confirmed this and explained that he has not yet had the opportunity to complete this yet.

Mr. Hall noted that there previously was a policy that if the person was a town resident and had no insurance the town would assist them and Chief Hazel confirmed this is still a written policy; however, a hardship must be proven and typically sent in writing.

Mr. Hall asked how old the other stations are and Chief Hazel noted that the North Station was constructed in 1976 and the South Station in 2001. Mr. Hall asked if there is a plan to address maintenance at these two stations and Chief Hazel explained that the roof at the North Station will likely need replacing within the next few years.

Mr. Hall asked what is being done with the old fire truck and Chief Hazel explained that it would likely go out to auction and noted that one community recently sold a fire truck one year older for \$7,000.

Mr. Lisiecki discussed the potential impacts the new larger developments could have on the fire departments resources and Chief Hazel noted that he definitely expects impacts as there will be an increase in population.

Mr. Lisiecki discussed communications and radio issues and suggested looking towards a digital encrypted system. Chief Hazel explained that the town is wideband as there is wider range of service than with the narrow band and noted that it is also a mutual aid system.

Emergency Management Systems

Chief Hazel noted that the FY17 emergency management systems budget has been level funded from FY16. Chief Hazel noted that Mr. Montuori now handles the Emergency Management Systems budget as a new director has not been hired.

Mr. Lisiecki suggested moving the emergency management systems budget to general government and Mr. Montuori noted that he can do this.

Mr. Cooke suggested moving hazmat to emergency management systems and Mr. Montuori noted that he will look into this.

3) Town Manager and Finance Director Reports (as applicable)

None

4) Finance Committee Matters of Interest (as applicable)

None

5) Committee Member Reports (as applicable)

None

6) Approval of Meeting Minutes

None

7) Approval of Payment of Recording Secretary and Time sheet

None

8) Future Proposed Meeting Dates (subject to change)

The next meeting of the Finance Committee will take place on March 31, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. at the town hall.

Adjourn.

MOTION: Mr. Aznavoorian made the motion to adjourn at 8:25 p.m.; seconded by Mr. McDermott and the motion carried 6-0.

Approved: May 26, 2016

Documents Presented and/or Discussed
March 24, 2016

- 1) FY17 Town Manager's Recommended Budget
A copy can be found with the Finance Department or Town Manager